

ADDRESS

OF THE

UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA

TO THE

CITIZENS OF PENNSYLVANIA,

September 6, 1866,

WITH

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AUGUST 22, 1866.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

IN the election which is at hand, momentous issues are submitted for your decision. The President and Congress have differed as to the settlement of the great questions raised by the recent war, and both have appealed to the people as to the ultimate arbiter.

No one, not willfully blind, can well mistake the points at issue. Congress has presented its policy in a Constitutional Amendment, which provides for the equal civil rights of all citizens; for a diminution of representation proportioned to the exclusion of citizens from the franchise; for the exclusion from office for the present of those who have already forsworn their allegiance to the Constitution; for the guaranteeing of the United States' debt; for the repudiation of the debt incurred in aid of rebellion; and for the refusal of any claim for the loss of slave property by emancipation. Until these provisions are incorporated in the organic law of the Republic, Congress proposes to suspend the lately rebel States from participation in the General Government, believing that the people through their Representatives have authority to prescribe the conditions upon which rebels, who have forfeited all rights, shall be restored to the full enjoyment of the rights which they formerly exercised. At the same time, the anxiety of Congress to restore the States to their normal relations to the Union is shown by the admission of Tennessee, notwithstanding the doubt thrown by the President upon the authenticity of her ratification of the amendments.

On the other hand, the President has assumed to himself the sole and irresponsible power of dictating the terms upon which the rebellious States should be readmitted. Without a pretence of constitutional authority, he appointed

Governors, ordered the convocation of Conventions elected by voters whose qualifications he himself prescribed, and laid down conditions whose acceptance he promised should entitle States to readmission. Some of the States neglected or refused to comply with these conditions; none of them, except Texas, obtained the confirmation of their new Constitutions from the people, though the recognized practice of the land requires such confirmation as essential to their validity. Yet the President now, with a strange forgetfulness of his own acts, declares that, by the dispersion of the rebel armies and the destruction of the Confederate Government, the rebel States were *ipso facto* restored to all their rights in the Union, and that Congress has no power to exclude their Representatives and Senators, nor to protect itself from the intrusion of avowed rebels who are ready to renew the oath of allegiance which has already so often been disregarded.

The President thus proposes to abandon the objects for which the nation has lavished its blood and treasure. In the Conventions which he so carefully organized, only North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas annulled the ordinances of secession; despite his earnest solicitations, South Carolina and Georgia only repealed them, thus asserting their right to renew them. North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Texas repudiated their State war debts; South Carolina and Mississippi have not done so, and no formal act has anywhere acknowledged the illegality of the Confederate debt, whose holders doubtless hope for its ultimate assumption. Georgia, in acknowledging the abolition of slavery, was careful to insert the proviso, "That acquiescence in the action of the Government of the United States is not intended to operate as a relinquishment or waiver or estoppel of such claim for compensation of loss sustained by reason of the emancipation of his slaves as any citizen of Georgia may hereafter make upon the justice and magnanimity of that Government."

But even if Mr. Johnson's Conventions had obediently conformed to all his requirements, the settlement which he would thus have effected would have lacked the essential element of stability, as the people of the respective States were not allowed the opportunity of confirming or rejecting that settlement, and consequently will hereafter hold themselves entitled to repudiate it. This vital point we are not allowed to doubt. Already, while they are yet on their good behavior and soliciting a restoration to their places in the Government, North Carolina, the least disloyal of the rebel communities, has rejected the new Constitution by a vote of her people and has announced through her highest court of judicature that, as the whole settlement was effected under military dictation, it was illegal, and that all that has since been effected under it is void. If it is thus in the green tree, what shall it be in the dry? Restore the insurrectionary States without unalterable constitutional guarantees, and what security have we that any of the measures extorted from them by the President will remain effec-

tive? The President and his new allies, the Democrats, assure them that they are entitled without conditions to full restoration. Thus encouraged, they are clamoring for restoration, not as a favor, but as a right. Once restored, they will look upon the concessions made under duress as memorials of their humiliation, to be put out of sight as speedily as possible, and the action of North Carolina shows how readily means will be found to accomplish their desires.

We have too vivid a recollection of the losses and miseries of the last five years to wish to see them renewed, and we shrink from contemplating the endless perspective of strife which opens upon us as we look forward to the results inevitable from thus patching up an ill-considered truce. If peace is to be lasting, it must be based upon terms which will give unalterable guarantees for the future in a solemn pact to which all portions of the people are parties. All questions arising from the war that can arouse sectional passions must be settled. The North can never submit to see rebellion rewarded by an increase of sixteen votes in the House of Representatives and the Electoral College. It cannot stand idly by while the freedmen who lavished their blood in our cause are reduced by peonage into a state worse than slavery itself. It cannot afford to pay the Southern planting interest two thousand millions of dollars for the emancipation of their four millions of slaves. It cannot run the risk of seeing the fearful total of our national debt doubled by the assumption of the unknown infinity of Confederate bonds and scrip. Yet all these are questions that, under Mr. Johnson's policy, may at any moment be forced upon us with all the energy, tenacity and unscrupulousness that are inspired by a stake so vast. Let the Democracy and the South control a majority of Congress, and what hope would we have of resisting such stupendous schemes of plunder, when the South and the Democracy have so carefully avoided a committal against them?

If Mr. Johnson's policy is thus so plainly disastrous, the means which he has adopted to insure its success are not such as to commend it to favor. We will not waste time in dwelling upon his desertion of the principles on which his party elevated him to the position which he has thus abused. We abstain from tracing out the tortuous course in which his actions first began to belie his words, and in which finally his words came to support his actions in falsifying all his pledges. These will pass into history and will link the name of Andrew Johnson with the undying contempt of the nation which he is thus betraying for reasons that time alone will reveal. These merely concern the verdict which will be passed upon the man, and save as forfeiting his claims to future confidence, they may be passed over in the silence of scorn. But it is otherwise with his measures, which are living issues on which you, fellow-citizens, are now to decide, and it is therefore worth while to consider the means by which he has brought those issues before you.

When, therefore, the President found that he could effect no breach in the

serried ranks of the Union party; that when he changed his colors only a few soldiers of fortune—such as the Cowans, Doolittles, and Randalls—could be seduced from their allegiance to principle, and that his dreams of control through holding the balance of power were vain; when thus he found that either he must retrace his path or enter into a full alliance with rebels and Democrats, what were the steps which he adopted to cover his desertion to the enemy? He began by denouncing as disunionists the men who had fought and struggled for the Union. He joined in the copperhead cry that the Congress on whose ticket he had been elected was a “Rump,” whose acts were of no binding force in the absence of members from States constructed by his arbitrary exercise of the one man power. And, finally, to seal the unholy confederation between the “President’s friends,” the rebels, and the Democrats, he brought into being the Convention of August the 14th, which has been aptly designated as the Confederate Convention.

On this Convention and its proceedings are based the hopes of the party to which it gave birth—a party nameless as yet, for it dared not retain the name of Democratic, while it dropped after a momentary assumption the stolen title of “National Union,” and which therefore may be christened the Confederate Party. The composition of this Convention was worthy of its parentage and its objects. If Fernando Wood, and Henry Clay Dean, and Clement L. Vallandigham were too offensive to be allowed to appear in it openly, the bargain by which their absence was purchased only gives them additional claim to enforce upon the Confederate Party the policy of which they are the acknowledged embodiment. If Mr. Vice-President Stephens came to Philadelphia without entering the Wigwam, because “peculiar circumstances of an antecedent nature made his non-participation as an active delegate more advisable than otherwise,” it was because he knew that the interests of his section were safe in the hands of Cowan and Pendleton, Doolittle and Jeremiah Black, Randall and Blair, Woodward and Bigler, and that his presence would only mar the scenic effect of the stage-play. But the programme so carefully rehearsed and so relentlessly carried out by the experienced political managers was too false and too barefaced to deceive the people. Rebels working for a pardon, and rebels from whom the blood of Gettysburg and the foul pestilences of Andersonville had scarce been washed by the recent exercise of the pardoning power, met their Northern friends and coadjutors—Woodward who had declared that Pennsylvania should go with the South—Jeremiah Black, who as Buchanan’s Attorney-General, had officially advised the President that an attempt at coercion would release all the States from their allegiance—Voorhees who had pledged himself never to vote for a man or a dollar to subdue the rebellion—Montgomery Blair who at Reading had just threatened us with civil war if his party were defeated in the coming election—these rebels and

sympathizers with rebellion met together, and for fear that the incautious bluntness of some untrained member might shock the public by giving utterance to some of the secrets of the Confederates, the gag-law was applied with a severity unexampled in the history of bodies pretending to be deliberative. Though they assembled ostensibly that the Southern and Northern wings of the party might take counsel together, all debate was rigorously prohibited; every proposition was directed to be referred without discussion to a committee, and when an honest Democrat from Illinois suggested that the resolutions and address be printed, in order that delegates not in the secret councils of the Confederacy might know what they were voting for, an unheard-of construction of the rules of order silenced him effectually and at once. How thoroughly and how unblushingly this was carried out to the end, may be inferred from the brazen admiration of it expressed in the *New York WORLD* of August 18.

“A word or two should be said in reference to the management of the Convention. Senator Doolittle presided most admirably, preserving at all times complete control of himself and of the body of which he was the chief officer. It was evident from the start that no debate was to be allowed. A noticeable instance occurred yesterday after the reading of the declarations of principles. A delegate from Pennsylvania promptly arose with the apparent intention of making some remarks, but his repeated calls of ‘Mr. President,’ ‘Mr. President,’ were of no use. Senator Doolittle paid no attention whatever to him, and announced that the question was on the adoption of the declaration just read, though no one moved that it be adopted. And so, immediately after the reading of the address by Mr. Raymond, a motion to adjourn *sine die* was offered by the Hon. John Hogan. Such action would not be possible in a party convention; but, as carried out here, it elicited the admiration of everybody.”

And it is these declarations thus concocted in secret and hurried through without debate that the Confederates expect us to assume as binding on unrepentant rebels and unredeemed peace-Democrats! Already the cry comes up to us from the South that they repudiate whatever is obnoxious to the unquenched rebel spirit. Thus the very next day after the performance of the farce, the *Richmond ENQUIRER* of Friday, August 17th, indignantly denounced it.

“We are constrained also to declare our astonishment and mortification, to use at present no stronger term, that Southern delegates should be found voting their unanimous assent—if indeed they did so. . . . How could the Convention, North or South, vote that ‘the war has maintained the authority of the Constitution,’ when the Convention was called together for the express purpose of endeavoring to restore the Constitution, now trampled under foot? How could Southern men thus sanction the constitutionality of the coercion of a State? How could our delegates ‘unanimously and enthusiastically’ vote to repudiate the Confederate debt? And especially, how could they thus join in ‘recognizing the services’ of the Federal armies, and the obligation of the robbed and penniless widows and orphans of our own dear martyred murdered heroes to pay some ‘debt’ as justly due by them to those who made them so?”

While thus repudiating the Southern share of the bargain proffered to them

by the Confederates, the "ENQUIRER," however, proceeds to claim the political benefits thence arising, and promises to "co-operate with those who formed the Philadelphia Convention, despite of and *without reference to the dogmas and declarations unnecessarily introduced into its platform.*"

And on August 22d, the ENQUIRER returns to the charge and argues that the strict discipline enforced by the managers of the Convention, releases the South from all obligation to adhere to the principles promulgated by it.

"We are not without authority for saying that when the reports [of the Committee on Resolutions and Address] were disclosed, there was among our delegation *the same strong dissatisfaction* with portions of it which the *Enquirer* and other papers have expressed. But they were without the opportunity at that late hour of making the explanations which objection would have rendered necessary; *and were thus under a sort of duress to be silent.* The press of Virginia, not being under a like disability, has, with unimportant exceptions, *very properly made the necessary protests, and thus saved the points for our people that were lost in the Convention.* This done, *and all inferences drawn to our prejudice from the platform thereby forestalled or dishonored,* we are all prepared to give a zealous co-operation to the Philadelphia movement, and to *concur in all the declarations proper to have been made on that occasion.*"

So, the Richmond EXAMINER of August 15th, very properly and logically protests against the South being bound by the action of delegates who, still unpardoned, could not, as postulants for executive clemency, do other than register the will of the President.

"We very fully concur as to the absurdity of persons professing to speak as freemen in a political convention, who are as yet unpardoned, and *who hold their very lives and all their property at the breath of the President.* If, however, they do not speak as freemen, it is clear *they ought not to speak for the South,* but leave the work to those who can do so without having to encounter by any possibility the Executive displeasure for a slip of the tongue. If gentlemen are unpardoned, their utterances are always open to suspicion of a desire to placate the pardoning power and thus get out of a scrape. *When men are on the scaffold with a rope about their necks, it has been customary to hear them as a matter of curiosity, to know what they would say under such a peculiar stress of circumstances, but their opinions have generally been printed to satisfy a morbid craving for the sensational and never for the public instruction.*"

So, too, the melodramatic spectacle of the arm-in-arm entrance of South Carolina and Massachusetts, which drew tears from our tender-hearted President, provokes very different emotions in our Southern brethren whose admission to the Government it was enacted to hasten. Thus the Richmond ENQUIRER of August 16th, cannot restrain its indignation.

"Did Mr. Orr go to Philadelphia *to confess* that his State lay on an extreme as far out from truth and justice as Massachusetts? That she was an equal offender? That, indeed, has often been charged against her, but it has not been confessed until now, when her sufferings and her sorrows make it impossible without shame. And by her own son! Perhaps a capacity for dirt-eating is not without its uses, and hence, that Mr. ORR is in his right place; but we reject

any implied assumption of Southern leadership or impersonation for South Carolina, as connected with the late performance. Virginia is for peace and reconciliation. But reluctant and grave in entering upon the fight, she will not be considered a part of any performance which winds up the tremendous tragedy through which we have passed *with artificial scenes and ostentatious displays, such as belong to a sensation fiction*. She has a better conception of the great role she has been acting, with the world as lookers-on."

The Richmond WHIG of the same date is more impressed with the ridiculousness of the scene, though it refrains from giving rein to its merriment.

"But, with our profound sense of the gravity of the occasion, when South Carolina and Massachusetts throw themselves into each other's arms, and pause a moment in the sweet embrace to enjoy the admiration of the bewildered spectators, *we cannot resist an inclination to—well, no matter!*"

The Mobile TIMES is less reticent, and derisively remarks:

"One enthusiastic observer, with a strong faculty for similitudes, recognized in this occurrence the fulfillment of the prediction concerning the lion (*couchant*) and the lamb (probably Governor Orr looked a *little sheep-ish*) lying together—the ardent affection they professed for each other sufficing for the *lying*."

The South, in fact, rates the Confederate Convention at its true value and properly appreciates the objects for which it was assembled. While repudiating all obligation to be bound by the declarations assumed to be assented to by the Southern delegates, it is perfectly willing to make use of the President and his new Confederate Party to renew its old control of the Government. Thus the Richmond ENQUIRER says:

"The Southern delegates may have given their voices or subscribed their names to these papers, but they have *not subscribed the names of their people*;" and then, after demanding a "RESTORATION OF THE POLITICAL EQUILIBRIUM," it continues, "the battle for this is to be fought in the Northern States, and *the President has inaugurated the wisest means to gain victory*."

The Richmond EXAMINER is equally outspoken.

"Let us get a controlling voice in the Government and then we have but to ask and we shall receive. . . . When we have routed Thad. Stevens, then let us, if we choose, settle any small differences we may have with Senator Doolittle and the National Union Party."

As the object of the Convention, thus, according to the avowals of those whom it was convoked to serve, was simply to deceive and over-reach the North while the Democracy and the Secessionists should aid each other into power, it may perhaps be worth while to examine briefly the platform which it adopted in the hope of accomplishing that object. As those portions which were introduced for the purpose of deceiving the loyalty of the North have already been repudiated by the organs of the insurrectionary States, they may be passed over with the assurance that after they shall have achieved their result, they will be consigned

to the place of broken oaths and pledges of which the history of the rebellion is so full. There are points, however, on which all the sections of the new Confederate Party are agreed, and these are worthy a passing notice.

The leading principle enunciated by the Convention, and proclaimed on every occasion by the President and all his allies, is that the rebellious States are entitled, without conditions and without guarantees, to resume their places in the Government. Any inquiry on the part of Congress as to their fitness to take part in ruling us is denounced as a usurpation of power, and all legislation during the exclusion of "eleven Sovereign States" is stigmatized as null and void. When this doctrine was first broached a year ago by the extreme copperheads, it was received at the North with the derision which it merited, and the South, yet trembling for its forfeited lands and lives, was slow to give credence to the audacity of its Northern allies. It now shares their audacity, and boldly threatens and blusters as of old, that it will ruin if not allowed to rule.

As usual, these sworn defenders of the Constitution find constitutional authority for this monstrous doctrine, that no State can forfeit its full rights under the Constitution as a portion in the Government; and that, whatever may be its misconduct and disloyalty, it cannot be refused those rights whenever it may choose to claim them. It were idle to argue the question whether the letter of the Constitution provides for the temporary suspension of those rights on the part of States which have defiantly thrown off their allegiance to the Constitution. Common sense requires that the Constitution be so interpreted as to preserve its own existence, and its existence would be impossible if the doctrines now solemnly put forth shall be recognized by the people as the organic law of the land, for under them the South, during the whole of the rebellion, would have been entitled to keep its Senators and Representatives at Washington to vote on every measure introduced for their subjugation; and at the election of 1864, it would have had the right to have its vote registered for McClellan and Pendleton, or for Davis and Stephens. The simple statement of the legitimate results of the doctrine is sufficient to show its destructive absurdity, and yet the Third Resolution of the Confederate Convention has the effrontery to declare, as "essential to the existence of our Republican institutions" that "neither Congress nor the General Government has any authority or power to deny the right to ANY State or to withhold its enjoyment under the Constitution from the people thereof," while the application of this to the rebel States is shown in the opening address of General Dix stating the object for which the Convention was assembled—"Thirty-six States have been governed by twenty-five. Eleven States have been DENIED THEIR RIGHTS, and even now ten States are denied the rights to which they are entitled in Congress. *It is to redress these wrongs that we have now met here.*" Even this, however, is outdone by the formal address of the Convention to the people of the United States, which asserts that

"neither the right of representation nor the duty of being represented was in the least impaired by the fact of insurrection."

It was thus that in 1860-61 the Democratic constitution-savers proclaimed the principle that there was no power to coerce a sovereign State in rebellion, and Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Attorney-General Black, and the Democracy at large did their utmost to have that principle embodied in our organic law. They truly alleged that the letter of the Constitution gave no formal right to make war upon the sovereign States of the Union, but the common sense patriotism of the people refused to believe that the founders of our Government had stultified themselves by creating institutions devoid of the power of self-preservation. The people interpreted the Constitution as a self-sustaining instrument and have vindicated their interpretation on the field of battle. The Democracy, even in their new alliance, now no longer descant upon the "heresy of coercion," but have invented, to conciliate that alliance, a new dogma equally destructive. It is for you, fellow-citizens, to condemn this new dogma as emphatically as you have done the old, and to spurn all such attempts to confer upon treason and rebellion the sanction of constitutional right.

Less important as a constitutional question, but still of vast magnitude, is the careful abstention of the Convention from denying the claims of the rebels for compensation for emancipated slaves or for the losses sustained from our armies. This can hardly have been an oversight, for the exclusion of such claims is embraced in the constitutional amendments proposed by Congress; and Georgia, as we have seen, was careful to provide for such claims when assenting to the abolition of slavery. It may, therefore, fairly be assumed that there is an understanding between the South and its Northern allies that the question of such compensation is to be entertained. We have had too dear an experience of the recklessness of Democratic majorities to look without well-founded dread to the result, when party ties and boundless plunder shall be the lever with which the South, then holding the balance of power in Congress, shall undertake to raise its Democratic friends to its own level on such questions. The country has paid for emancipation in powder and ball, and it will not willingly double its debt and involve its finances in hopeless confusion for the purpose of rewarding treason and rebellion.

The "Address to the People of the United States" adopted by the Confederate Convention, need not detain us long. Its platitudes endorsing the war and the gallant armies of the Union, amount to nothing; for the New York DAILY NEWS, a good authority, informs us that in the committee it was unanimously agreed that the "offensive and unnecessary terms and phrases used in the address should be stricken out," but that Mr. Raymond, notwithstanding, "read the address the next day without these alterations being made;" his bad faith thus releasing the South from obligation, while retaining what was considered

necessary to deceive the North. So the Richmond ENQUIRER protests "in the name of our people that they be considered no parties to this unanimous vote" by which the address was declared adopted. The admissions of the rights and wrongs of the South, in the address, however, are equally emphatic and more labored than those of the platform, and it dwells with much earnestness on the injustice perpetrated by temporarily suspending the rebel States from representation. "Taxation without representation," is a popular cry, and one to which the unthinking may attach importance, without considering the attendant circumstances. If there were any intention of prolonging the denial of representation indefinitely, while levying taxes, every northern freeman would condemn such a policy, however much the unrepresented might have deserved it, as tending to weaken our respect for one of the fundamental axioms of republican government. As at present exercised, however, it is merely the temporary incident of delay in securing the necessary guarantees from the insurrectionary States. Congress has placed the matter in their own hands, and only their stubborn wilfulness keeps them from putting an end at once to the condition of which they complain. The promptitude with which Tennessee was admitted as soon as she adopted the amendments shows the anxiety of Congress to put an end to this exceptional condition of the South. But while we recognize fully the general principle that representation should accompany taxation, we wholly deny that the South has a right to make such complaints. Within her borders are four millions of freedmen whom she taxes without stint for all purposes within her competence, and to whom she utterly refuses all voice in the levying of those taxes. As long as in New Orleans the freedmen are heavily taxed to support schools of which the doors are closed to them, and to maintain a police armed and hired to massacre them, the Southern States, in very shame, cannot complain that for a few short months they are not consulted with regard to taxes which are expended for their benefit as freely as for ours.

But there is one point in the Address, fellow-citizens, which is worthy of your most thoughtful consideration. We have seen above that the conditions of restoration imposed by Congress are the lightest that are consistent with the safety of the Republic, and such as only a great and magnanimous nation could offer to misguided citizens whom it desires to welcome back to the fold. Yet the Address plainly advises the South to reject those conditions, and, pretending to speak in the interest of peace and harmony, stimulates the contumacy of unrepentent rebels by telling them that the acceptance of such terms is incompatible with their freedom and self-respect.

"No people, however, yet existed whose loyalty and faith such treatment long continued would not alienate and impair. And the ten millions of Americans who live in the South would be unworthy citizens of a free country, degenerate sons of an heroic ancestry, unfit ever to become the guardians of the rights and liberties bequeathed to us by the fathers and founders of this Republic, if they

could accept, with uncomplaining submissiveness, the humiliation thus sought to be imposed upon them. Resentment of injustice is always and everywhere essential to freedom; and the spirit which prompts the States and people lately in insurrection, but insurgent now no longer, to protest against the imposition of unjust and degrading conditions, makes them all the more worthy to share in the government of a free commonwealth, and gives still firmer assurance of the future power and freedom of the Republic."

The politicians of the South are but too ready to take up this cry, now that they hope with the aid of the President and by the means of the Convention to establish that their rebellion was legitimate and worked no forfeiture of their rights. Governor Orr, of South Carolina, in his proclamation of July 4th, ordering the election of delegates, strove to arouse the passions of his people by telling them—

"We are threatened with disfranchisement and being remanded to a territorial condition, and are to be denied all the rights and privileges dear to an American, consecrated by the blood of the heroes of 1776, until we subscribe to terms too degrading and humiliating to be entertained by a freeman for a single moment."

Still more lamentable is it to see the Chief Magistrate of the nation himself pandering to this disreputable sectional agitation, and in the blindness of his partisan fury stimulating the South to reject the pacific overtures of Congress, while pretending to be eager for the complete pacification of the whole country. We cannot forget how he labored to keep Tennessee out of the Union through the action of his friends in opposing the adoption of the Constitutional Amendments; and in one of his latest utterances—during his electioneering tour, in his speech at the New York banquet, August 29th—he remarked:

"Do we want a Union again? I have said before, and I now repeat it, I do not want to let them back into the Union degraded and debased. *They would not be fit to form a part of this great American family.* I want them to come back with all their manhood."

But this new Confederate Peace Party, in thus striving to avert a settlement on the Congressional plan, does not shrink from the fearful results contingent upon arousing the sectional passions which it is thus laboring to excite. Nay, it even courts them, and dares to hold out to a free people threats of renewed war unless it is allowed to have its own way. The Address thus proceeds:

"The time is close at hand when members of a new Congress are to be elected. If that Congress shall perpetuate this policy, and, by excluding loyal states and people from representation in its halls, shall continue the usurpation by which the legislative powers of the Government are now exercised, common prudence compels us to anticipate augmented discontent, a sullen withdrawal from the duties and obligations of the Federal Government, internal dissensions and a general collision of sentiments and pretensions which may renew, in a still more fearful shape, the civil war from which we have just emerged."

Nor is the South slow to echo the cry. Knowing that the arsenals within its territory are stored with arms and equipments to an extent hitherto unparalleled, and believing that in another appeal to arms it would have even more effective support from its Northern allies than before, the Richmond EXAMINER boastfully exclaims, and its words are approvingly quoted by the New York WORLD—

"We want it distinctly understood that, having failed to get away from this Government, we intend now not only to stand by it ourselves, but to aid in making all others do the same, whenever we are called upon to do so. Let the Radicals bear this in mind when they attempt 'rebellion' after they are beaten at the fall elections."

Fellow-citizens, the question is a grave one whether you are prepared to surrender the Government to rebels beaten in the field who thus propose a renewal of the unholy conflict if they are not allowed to rule.

All these are mighty issues; but the mightiest of all awaiting your decision is whether this Union of ours is an arbitrary despotism or a constitutional representative Government. This is a question which the President has unfortunately forced upon us, and we cannot escape it. One way or another it has to be decided by your votes in the coming election, and as your verdict is given, so will be the institutions which we shall transmit to our children. Ponder it well, fellow-citizens, for a matter more vital to the interests of mankind never was submitted to the suffrages of a free people.

The President, conscious that his course has constantly transcended the limit of his constitutional authority, loses no opportunity of disclaiming the desire to arrogate to himself unusual powers. You, fellow-citizens, however, know how light is the cost of professions to veteran politicians, and you will not fail to weigh his actions against his words. You will not forget how, when your armies shattered the Confederacy, he took no counsel from the people or their representatives, but hastened to assume the right of reconstructing the South according to his sole pleasure; how he set up state governments of his own, whom he paid out of the funds of the War Department; and thus, through these creatures of his will, laid down laws for the conquered territory, which he caused to be registered by Conventions elected under rules and limitations prescribed by himself. You permitted all this in silence, fully believing his solemn assurances that when your representatives should assemble in Congress the whole matter would be submitted to them for their revision, alteration or confirmation. You never for a moment supposed that the great questions which arose from a four years' civil war could be settled by Executive usurpation of legislative functions, and that the people were to have no voice in settling the details of success bought by their limitless patriotism and sacrifices. You remembered that Mr. Lincoln, though he had worthily

earned the unbounded confidence of the country, was always careful, even during war, not to infringe upon the law-making power, and that when, in December, 1863, he put forth his Amnesty Proclamation, he specially recognized the right of Congress to decide in the last resort as to the admission of the rebel states.

“And for the same reason it may be proper to further say that whether members sent to Congress from any State shall be admitted to seats constitutionally, *rests exclusively with the respective Houses and not to any extent with the Executive.*”

You were therefore not prepared to find that when Congress proceeded to investigate the settlement made by the Executive, they were sharply told that it was none of their business; that the President's action was final, and that they could only determine the qualifications of individual members, with the further assumption that the simple oath of allegiance was the only test of loyalty which they could lawfully apply to claimants for seats. You had not expected that when Congress should ask the President for information as to the details of his arrangements with the insurrectionary States, information should be totally withheld for six weeks, and should then be given in a fragmentary and incomplete manner, while the presidential organs were raising a clamor about congressional delays and were accusing the national legislature of an intention to postpone action indefinitely. You were not prepared to see the Executive throw off all semblance of respect for the legislative department of the government and abuse to the mob of Washington your representatives by name, and accuse them of plotting assassination. When, according to his theory, Louisiana has been for nearly three years a sovereign State of the Union, you were not prepared to see him practically set aside her Governor, and in concert with subordinates dictate whether State conventions should assemble, and lend his countenance to an inhuman massacre. You were not prepared to hear him promise the rebels of Missouri—disfranchised by State laws—his aid in resisting those laws by sending General Hancock to protect them with military power against their State authorities. You were not prepared to hear the President's Postmaster-General and principal confidant, Randall, speak publicly of all federal office holders as “eating the President's bread and butter,” as though the chief servant of the people were their master and owner. When the committee of the Confederate Convention publicly presented him with their proceedings, you were not prepared to hear the Executive, placed in power to execute the bidding of Congress, officially denounce that Congress as a body “*hanging upon the verge of the government, as it were, a body called, or which assumes to be the Congress of the United States!*” Certainly you were not prepared to find him, in his Niagara speech of September 2d, palter with the dread crisis which he had provoked, and sneer at the stand which Congress has so manfully taken in defence of your rights:

"Congress has the right to do a great many things, but it has done a great many things that it had no right to do. Yes, they have a right, and it is about as philosophic, about as reasonable as that of the madman who claimed a right to shear wolves. He would shear a wolf, because he had a right to shear a wolf. So Congress has the right to restore the union of the States, and therefore they will restore them, and if anybody else assumes this duty they will dissolve the Union, because they had the right to restore the Union."

While his faithful Secretary of State proclaimed his master's omnipotence and his contempt for the constituted authorities of the nation by declaring, "That there were three conditions, and though heaven and earth shall pass away, yet the word of Andrew Johnson that the States should be restored upon these conditions having been pledged should be fulfilled!"

Fellow citizens, it would be useless to shut our eyes to the danger to our institutions when an unscrupulous man of narrow mind, violent passions and despotic tendencies thus occupies the Chief Magistracy of the nation and is thus ready to break down all the limits imposed by the constitution on his exercise of power. We have seen him recognize no barrier to his authority when his "policy" was at stake. We have seen him abuse the enormous federal patronage for political purposes in a manner fortunately hitherto unexampled. We have seen him hailed as a second Messiah by despairing rebels, who gladly promise him armed support in his assaults on the principles which elevated him to power. We have seen the sympathizers with rebellion in the North rally around him and proclaim themselves ready to do his bidding if he would admit them to the sweets of office. We cannot disguise to ourselves the imminent peril to our institutions of these lawless elements acting under color of the law at the will of this bold, bad man. Yet this peril may be surmounted if only the people are true to themselves, and even Andrew Johnson may be taught that there is a power superior to his own. He has appealed to the people, and he knows that if the people are resolute to maintain their rights he must submit.

More than ever before is Pennsylvania the battleground on which is to be decided the destiny of the nation. Maryland is probably lost to us, since Executive influence will swamp the votes of her loyal men with those of hordes of returned rebels. Missouri is in danger from the military interference threatened there. If the great Middle States are true, however, all will yet be safe, and the eyes of the Union are turned on the Keystone to mark whether she firmly maintains her proud position. If she fails, all is gone. Rally, then, in support of your representatives who have so nobly battled for your rights. The election of our gallant candidate for Governor is secure, but no effort must be wanting to give him a majority that shall strike despair to the hearts of the confederates from Maine to Texas. Let every Union district return its congressman by an increased majority, and where the Democracy has triumphed heretofore, let

us reduce their vote, and if possible, win new recruits for the garrison of Freedom in the capitol. By proper exertion we can gain three or even four members, and such a substantial triumph will defeat the foul schemes of the plotters who, from Richmond to New Orleans, are gloating over their anticipated triumph. Thus do your duty, now, fellow citizens, that, in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln, "THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE AND BY THE PEOPLE, SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH."

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HORACE BINNEY, JR.
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WILLIAM SELLERS,
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